



THE NEWSLETTER

June/July 2010

of the **Golf Course Superintendents Association of New England, Inc.**

Sponsors and administrators of the Troll-Dickinson Scholarship Fund – Awarded yearly to deserving Turf Management Students.

Golf as a Civilising Force

By Michael Stachowicz

Frederick Law Olmsted is considered the father of American landscape architecture. He opened the first landscape architecture business in America and has designed many parks, estates, and communities. His design credits include Central Park in New York City, the 1893 World's Fair in Chicago, and the Emerald Necklace in Boston. While his firm lived on past his death in 1903 and went on to work with golf courses (housing development components), he was never personally involved with golf course design. Famously, though, in 1895, Olmsted designed the Village of Pinehurst in North Carolina – so he may be said to have a golfing connection.

But his principles of design not only work for many courses, they could help change how people look at golf courses and the environment. In this day in age, when the focus of our politics and economy is on 'green initiatives', it seems that a look back to Olmsted's ideas might help progressive golf course leaders plot a path forward.

Olmsted had a vision of the American landscape as a reflection of the national character, with its broad vistas and open skies, and in this vein wanted to mitigate for America's developing urban spaces. Olmsted believed in the recuperative powers of the parks he designed as an antidote to the unhealthy affects of urban life. This is a constant theme in Olmsted's life and work, he felt that proper landscaping brought about personal health and a health to society. Urbanisation led to a busy, walled-in effect on people that

could be mitigated with a properly designed park. At Olmsted's urging, many cities adopted his system of parks, broad avenues, and greenways, which encouraged the appreciation and preservation of nature; his influence is felt today in public spaces across the country.

Golf courses today would be welcomed by Olmsted as they are first and foremost parks. They are parks for a segment of the population that plays the game. It serves that need we have as humans to connect with nature and with each other, much the same way a park does. It isn't that much of a stretch to take Olmsted's writings and goals and apply them to golf courses to make them better courses, better resources to their community, and better ecologically. The overall theme that golf has had for the last half a century is that man can tame nature and do it convincingly. To what end? This is purely ego driven, and through that we have lost something that is vital to us as human beings.

"A man's eyes cannot be as much occupied as they are in large cities by artificial things," wrote Olmsted. This statement alone can be directly applied to over designed or maintained golf course properties. Annual flowers, retaining walls, repeating mounds, water falls, and cart paths all conspire to defeat this belief of Olmsted's.

Olmsted liked to use the terms 'pastoral' and 'picturesque' for different landscape design styles. Pastoral design seems to compliment golf courses well as it is described as an 'open greensward with small bodies of water

and scattered trees and groves' that should result in a 'soothing and restorative atmosphere'. The picturesque is what most people think landscape architecture is, a style that relies on profuse plantings for a sense of the 'richness and bounteousness of nature'.

In the end, Olmsted was a humanist who saw parks (pastoral areas) as a civilising force for a rapidly growing urban population that had little access to natural scenery. Such thoughts will ring true to players of the game.

In general Olmsted thought that the designed landscape should allow for long views, and should not have man made gardens that would break up the sweeping grandeur of the place. Man's penchant for installing many small-scale flashy gardens can circumvent the purpose of the healing landscape by being too busy. For example if one stops to view a flower bed that by design calls attention to itself at the expense of the larger view, 'the landscape becomes confused' and one will miss the 'spirit of the place'.

Golf courses already have certain elements going against the perfect Olmstedian vision. The tees, greens, and bunkers are much like the aforementioned manmade formal gardens in a natural landscape, they have a tendency to steal a person's focus. As noted, Olmsted sought to exclude objects that would call attention to themselves and distract from the landscape as a whole. And that is what is done

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Olmsted - continued from page 1



Dedham Country and Polo Club (Top) The striping is very overbearing. Tree planting is linear with the only goal of separating this hole from others. (Below) The most recent picture of the same hole. The view is no longer artificially limited, other landscape elements are revealed such as specimen trees, rock outcroppings, and one has a better sense of the topography

with much of the design of golf courses. Some golf architects in recent years have mitigated for this by producing design work that features low teeing grounds that blend in with the topography. Some teeing grounds, as at Chambers Bay in Seattle, are not level, which allows for a even more natural look. The other recent trend has been naturalized bunkers which can help fit Olmsted's ideal. For this to be successful in an Olmstedian way, naturalising a bunker requires more than unmowed grass and rough edging. It must fit the topography.

Over the past fifty years many golf courses have embraced the idea that their membership has the resources and the talented superintendent to tame nature. The result is turf grown in a monostand and conditioned to the

point of artificial distraction. The striping effect of modern day mowers also show the results of man imposing his will on the property. Tree planting is another way that not only hurts Olmsted's vision because they are usually developed in rows to separate holes, but limit views. Other ways memberships and superintendents exhibit their control over the environment: flower beds and formal cart paths. All of this is an example of the genius of the property's caretakers being revealed, not what Olmsted referred to as the 'genius of the place'.

Another part of Olmsted's beliefs is that the most striking scenery is one that which does not seem to have a

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President's Message

As I write this message we on the Board have gone thru some changes. Unfortunately due to other commitments Jedd Newsome is leaving his post as Newsletter Chairman. I want to thank Jedd for all his hard work and volunteering for the Board. Until we find his replacement we will be working as a Board with Julie Heston to produce the newsletter. Our goals continue to be providing not only timely information which is valuable for our members but also an avenue for the Friends of our Association to advertise their business. We take both very seriously and will do our best during this time of transition.

As all of you know it's turning out to be a very tough summer. Reports from around the area include difficulties with disease and insect control, irrigation issues, and water shortages.

Here at Framingham we've had numerous irrigation issues including pumping station failures and water shortages and trying to control a nasty case of curvularia. Times like these call for smart decision making even when member's expectations are unrealistic and can cause turf injury. You shouldn't be afraid of calling around to discuss problems you are encountering. No one is on an island in this area and most times the only people who understand what you are going thru is other Superintendents. I wish everyone success the following months and hope that you are remaining visible and keeping the lines of communication open with your memberships.

Since I last wrote we have had some very successful events. The S&B was held at Belmont where Mike Rose showed off his fabulous golf

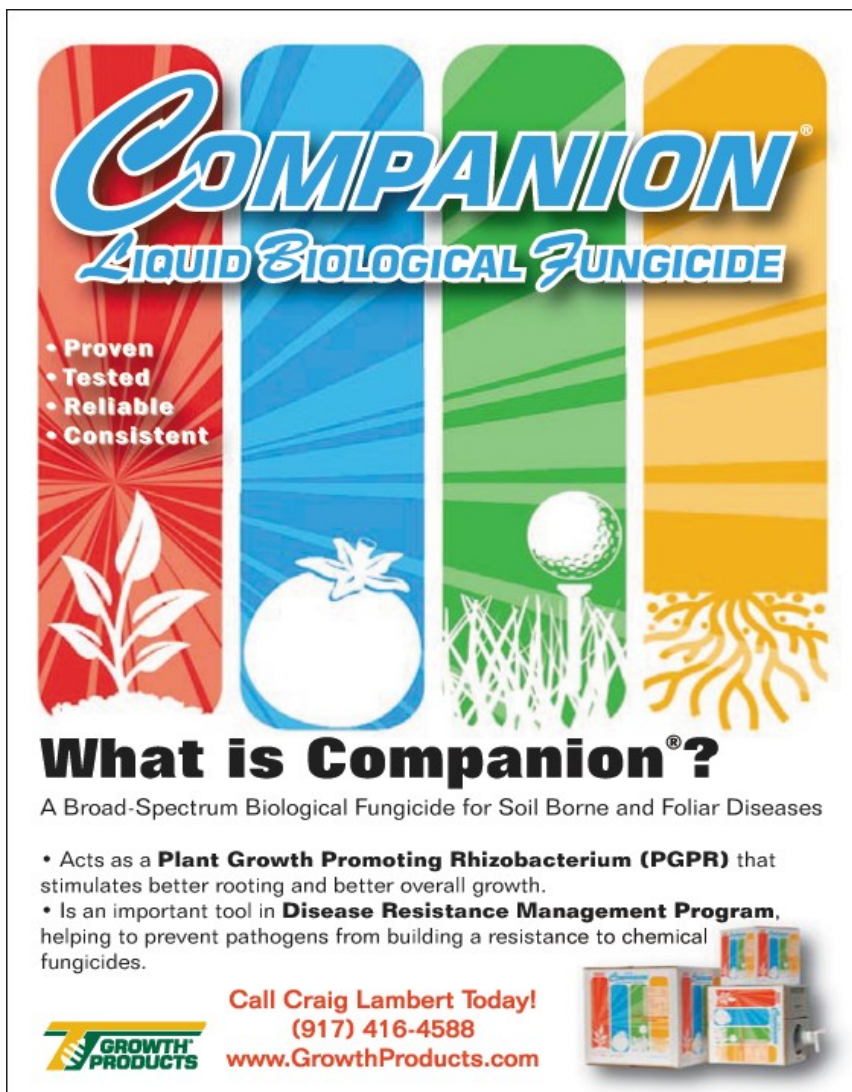
course on a very hot and humid day. Overall the event raised just under \$16,000 for the S&B. Congratulations to Carl Miner and his committee for pulling off a great event and thanks to all that donated rounds of golf and to all our vendors for their support. Please take the time to thank them the next time they stop in for a visit. Our July Barbuque was well attended even though we were in the middle of an interesting hot stretch. Thanks go out to Dave Stowe for hosting.

Some things you should know about over the coming months:

- The 2010 Ouimet Committee will be calling over the next few weeks looking for support for this year's Marathon. Nat Binns from TPC will be marathoning for us again and we ask that you support the cause.
- Our next golf event is on August 17 at Marlborough Country Club. For those of you who have not played it's a great take. Ken Crimmings has hosted us in August for the last few years and the golf course is always fantastic. Thanks in advance to Ken and his staff for the quality conditions that we will experience.
- The Assistant Superintendent initiation has been waived again for 2010. The Board believes that this Association offers each Assistant an avenue for education and builds camaraderie for their future as Golf Course Superintendents. Membership applications can be found on the website under the "Membership" tab or by calling Sharon. The 4th Annual Assistant Superintendent Tournament is being held at Franklin Country Club on October 19 where Trent Lynch assists Mike Luccini.

Until next month, may the simple pleasures of life including good friends, family, health, happiness and peace be with you and your families. ❖

Patrick Daly, CGCS
GCSANE President



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border or an end. In fact, a great tool for an engaging landscape is the use of an boundary like the crest of a hill or a grove of trees, but that boundary is not absolute. It invites the one travelling in the landscape to move around that clump of trees or traverse that hill to see what is revealed on the other side. A compelling landscape can do this again and again to the observer. A golf course is very good at this aspect. But let's keep in mind that we do not want a wall of trees to pass through to get to our next hole. It should be more subtle than that. Tour pros often talk about how they like a hole completely visible to them which makes sense from their point of view, the less mystery, the better they are able to score. But from a purely recreational point of view semi blind holes, corners to go around (doglegs), hills to climb, hollows to explore, these are all compelling experiences for a landscape observer and requires a good deal of imagination to negotiate as a golfer.

So think back to the courses that are near and dear to our hearts, such as National Golf Links of America, Royal Dornoch, Royal Birkdale, Sand Hills and how these are all courses that reflect the genius of the place. They bare no mark of the superintendent nor the membership. Now think

about most other courses and some of the things that stand out: a good orchestration of mowers and manpower exhibited through striping of turf, flower beds around tees, manmade waterfalls, or expensive brilliant white sand. These all are examples of man's ability to manipulate nature. But these manipulations, rather than enhancing the property, actually detract and obscure the genius of the place.

For decades after the first televised US Open that was at Oakland Hills in the 1950s, courses aspired to be just like that. This Donald Ross course that had been redesigned by Robert Trent Jones exhibited narrow fairways not in scale with their surroundings, deep green rough, and the final touches to the bowling alley effect in the form of a dense tree line. For at least four decades after this event clubs aspired to this. But there should be no standard other than that a course should reflect its local flavour, through topography, views or grass types. Golf has the least reason of any sport to try to homogenise its playing fields. It is the diversity of the courses that is a very compelling component of this game.

The embrace of these philosophies does have an impact beyond design and presentation. Through the removal of trees, healthier turf can survive with less input. The more natural the over-

all setting of the course is, the less pressure there should be on the colour of the turf, reducing fertilizer need. Less intense mowing practices lead to fuel savings. Fewer annual flower plantings save resources. A more natural edging to the golf holes can help cut back on water use. Olmsted becomes the design component to a sustainable movement at a golf course. If used properly, it can also be a marketing tool for the environmental movement at a golf course.

Not all golf courses are built on great pieces of land. There are some golf courses that will live and die by their manmade ornamentation. Some course need trees, flowers, or the most perfectly striped green grass. But this article is meant to offer the suggestion that we should identify the property's strongest attributes and manage to them. Not every course is going to be from the golden age or a links course or a mountain course or a resort course or a parkland course, but the idea is to find out what the course really is and have it be that in earnest, not something else. ❖

Reprinted with permission from
Golf Course Architecture
April 2010 issue

Ouimet Golf Marathon

This year GCSANE will again be teaming up with the Francis Ouimet Scholarship Fund to participate in their 18th Annual Golf Marathon which will be held on August 11th at Stow Acres Country Club. GCSANE has raised over \$5,000 the past two years through this event, all going towards scholarships for kids who work in golf at clubs throughout the state of Massachusetts. The teams that participate will play at least 100 holes of golf, and receive per hole pledges or flat donations.

The Golf Marathon is the largest in the United States, and is participated in by over 40 clubs and organizations

from Massachusetts. Annually it helps to raise close to \$300,000 for scholarships, which are awarded to kids who work as caddies, in pro shop or golf course operations.

The Francis Ouimet Scholarship Fund is The Golf Charity of Massachusetts™. Since its start in 1949, it has awarded over \$22 Million dollars to over 4,600 students. In 2010-2011 it will award \$1.46 Million to approximately 300 scholars, which is a 10% increase from the previous year.

For more information on the Ouimet Marathon or the Ouimet Scholarship, visit www.ouimet.org or call 774.430.9090. ❖

Summer Survival Mode

By Jim Skorulski , Senior Agronomist

The extreme weather is impacting golf courses around the region with conditions not seen since 1988. Some parts of the region have the added challenge of drought conditions that are straining water supplies and raising concerns over water use restrictions. With soil temperatures consistently in the 85-88 degree range, significant stress on root systems abounds.

The higher-than-normal stress has ramped up disease pressure, especially dollar spot, brown patch and summer patch activity. Parasitic nematode populations also are impacting a number of golf courses. There is a potential new bacterial threat to creeping and velvet bentgrass reported by Dr. Mitkowski at the University of Rhode Island. The bacteria, *Acidovorax avenae*, is active during hot weather causing plants to bleach out (etiolate) and wilt. The bacteria has been isolated from infected plants collected from several New England golf courses.

The following are some basic tips for surviving the extended heat and humidity:

- Be conservative - this is not the time to experiment with new products or tank mixes. Spoon-feed with light rates of a balanced soluble fertilizer. Go with the basics that have a proven track record.
- Avoid applying DMI chemistries in the heat. Annual bluegrass is susceptible especially triticonazole and metaconazole so rotate to other fungicide classes until the heat breaks.
- Be careful using growth regulators on stressed annual bluegrass. Trimmit and Cutless are excellent products with bentgrass greens, but should not be in the mix on *Poa annua* surfaces in high heat conditions. Stick with Primo for *Poa annua* greens and keep the rates sensible.
- Avoid combining Primo, Cutless or Trimmit with any DMI fungicide. The

combination can result in over-regulation of heat-stressed annual bluegrass.

- With the increased disease pressures, shorten up intervals between fungicide applications. Check sprayer calibration and nozzles, and apply at water volumes to reach your target.
- Follow your gut. If your intuition says don't do it ...don't. Self-inflicted damage is the hardest to accept. Yes, we need to mow, roll, topdress, and vent greens during some difficult weather, but skipping a mowing or a rolling when the surfaces are saturated can make the difference between success and failure.
- Reemphasize the importance of equipment operation on and around greens. Make sure mower baskets are emptied frequently. Save the venting and topdressing practices for days when the weather breaks.

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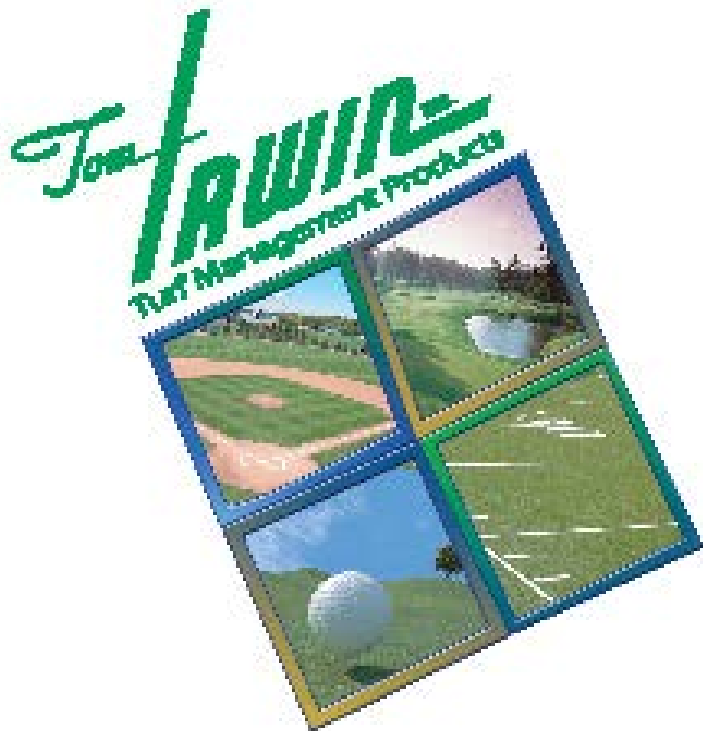
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Monitor soil moisture closely to program irrigation and direct hand-watering and syringing practices. This is not the time to saturate the root zone. Train competent staff about the difference between hand watering and syringing, and be sure they realize the importance of the task.

Stay focused and remain flexible to survive the difficult weather period. It's the first time in a few years we have experienced an extended heat wave, and fortunately they are fairly rare in this region. Hopefully, the weather pattern breaks and brings with it the more seasonal conditions rather than one that will be long remembered. ❖

Source; Northeast Region Green Section- Dave Oatis, Director doatis@usga.org; Adam Moeller, Agronomist amoeller@usga.org Jim Skorulski, Senior Agronomist j Skorulski@usga.org.

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GCSANE 18th Annual Scholarship and Benevolence Tournament Recap

By Carl Miner

The Golf Course Superintendents Association of New England's 18th Annual Scholarship and Benevolence Tournament at Belmont Country Club was a huge success. From the generosity of our sponsors, rounds of golf donors, and those who bought and sold raffles, we were able to raise close to \$16,000 for the S&B Fund. In the past this fund has awarded over \$105,000 in Scholarship and Benevolent aid to our members and their families.

Thank you to Belmont Country Club, host Golf Course Superintendent Michael Rose, 1st Assistant Patrick Manning, 2nd Assistants Dan Hart and Charlie Dixon for all their extra effort to make it a truly special day. The Golf Course was superb.

This year's sponsors were:

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Thank you to all.

The results of the Better Ball of Two format were as follows:

1st Gross 66	Ron Dobosz and Bacon Fisk
2nd Gross 72	Michael Luccini and Tom McLssac
3rd Gross 73	Tom Schuler and Jack Mackintosh
1st Net 64	Michael Marshall and Paul Ratti
2nd Net 64	Robert Galvin and Tom Harrington
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4th Net 65	Michael Hermanson and Robin Hayes
5th Net 65	Ed Downing and Sean Hanley
6th Net 65	John McNulty and Matt Little

CTP #3 10'10" Jack Mackintosh
CTP #5 18" Jason Adams
CTP #12 6'4" Dave Johnson
CTP #15 5'1" Mike Marks

Longest Drive #18 Michael Stachowicz

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Our condolences are extended to Jim Fitzroy and family on the passing of Jim's mother Marion "Vickie" L. Fitzroy on June 24, 2010.

Our condolences are extended to Mike Kroian and family on the passing of Mike's uncle Mark Markarian who passed away on May 20, 2010. Mark was the superintendent at East Greenwich Golf & CC for many years and business partners with Mike Kroian, Sr.

Our condolences are extended to Mike Leavey and family on the passing of Mike Leavey's father Walter Leavey on July 23, 2010.

Congratulations to Jeff and Jodie Urquhart on the birth of their son Benjamin Murphy on June 23, 2010.

As in the past, *The Newsletter* continues to invite Affiliate members to submit a press release about new personnel, new products or a company bio. We will print each and every release free of charge. This is a great way to advertise for free.

Please make the following correction in the GCSANE 2010 Directory: Affiliate **Joe Lazaro's** phone number should be **617-285-8670**.

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Newton-Commonwealth G.C. Barbecue
Host: David Stowe, CGCS

Golf Results:

1st Gross:
Garrett Whitney / Andrew Langlois -32

1st Net:
Charlie Downing / Dave Moe (Newton Commonwealth) 29

CALENDAR

August 17:
GCSANE Monthly Meeting
Individual Championship
Marlborough Country Club
Host: Ken Crimmings, CGCS

September 29:
GCSANE Monthly Meeting
Team of Two Tournament
Franklin Park Golf Club
Host: Russell Heller, CGCS

October 18:
GCSANE Monthly Meeting
Member/Guest Tournament
Charles River Country Club
Host: Paul Blanusa

October TBA:
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9-Hole Meeting
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